

WOOLWORTH CATHEDRAL

Wood, Clement, 1880-1950

Lost in a climbing forest of skyscrapers
Trinity sulks, a deserted shrine;
Her few worshippers walk tremblingly,
Sniffing the musty air from her buried dead,
Senselessly mumbling over and over
The ritual of a dead god.

Towering aloft into the conquered sky
The Woolworth Temple soars above its neighbors--
A triumphant monument of the millions of worshippers of the true God of today
Raised by blood-soaked and vice-trained pennies
Squeezed out of weak and pitiful girls,
Robbed of life and beauty.
That it might first kiss the morning sunshine;
Raised by trickling nickels and dimes
Levied on needy families,
That it might be a glory and a dream
In the soft gray shine of dusk.
And a pillar of white splendor at night.
Outsparkling the other lights of the city.
And the poor imitations passing slowly above it.
Night after night.

O Shrine of the God of Gold.
O Temple to the true God of Today.
Who will reign until we have made a new god, Man,
To rule in earth and heaven,
I pause for a moment,
To lay a worshipper's tribute before you!